

date: 12 JUN 1978

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by reducing the chromatic mistakes at the same time, either through insertion or filter screens into the system or through separation of the light (observation in different focal planes).

3. When questioned about the planning of research by the State, Rompe, of course, strongly advocated the idea; he was forced to acknowledge, however, that research runs the risk of being greatly hampered by governmental bureaucracy. He related the following example to illustrate this point: the Oberspreewerk in Berlin-Oberschöneweide has been engaged in the development of devices for the measurement of physical qualities as functions of frequency. The plant forwarded proposals to the Planning Ministry in Moscow concerning a frequency range within the limits of ten thousand to one million Hertz. Moscow accepted the plan but amended it with the order to extend the frequency range so as to include the entire range from ten Hertz to one hundred million Hertz which, as Rompe remarked, was absolute nonsense, because so large a range must be broken down into smaller ones in which different principles of measurement and devices have to be applied. After this had been pointed out to Moscow, a new order not only confirmed the one prescribing the impossibly large range but also required two model samples instead of one and fixed a closed deadline for their completion. The plant had to undertake their construction, although it was believed to be a waste of material and effort, and, in order to complete them in the prescribed time, did a very bad job. After the deadline, nobody was allowed to make any improvements on the devices because the time allowed for them in the plan had expired. The devices then remained unchanged in the plant for nearly three months, whereupon they were claimed by Moscow. They were sent there and, as became known later, arrived at a wrong destination. In subsequent correspondence between Moscow and the works, the latter proposed to effect certain changes of the devices in order to somehow make them workable. This, however, was declined because the plan did not allow time for such additional work. In Rompe's opinion, the devices are somewhere in Moscow unused and unusable.
4. Thus, while admitting the possibility of hampering effects effected by State planning on research, Rompe pinned the responsibility for them entirely on inefficient bureaucracy which, he hoped, could be reduced to harmless proportions in his industrial research sector. In this connection, he made rather bitter comments about Minister Selbmann who, he said, is one of the worst bureaucrats always trying to oppose his, Rompe's, efforts to make planning work smooth and sensible, always insisting on carrying out Russian orders to the letter and; thus, endangering the rational operation of the whole system.

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6. Rompe's present political outlook in regard to pending events, as developed in many conversations, can thus be summarized:

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- a. There will be no shooting war because neither the Russians nor the Americans want it.
- b. The cold war will gradually be settled. Negotiations between the Americans and the Russians are being held "secretly" without the public being aware of them; they will eventually result in an agreement whereby the two systems can live with each other.
- c. As for Germany, the two German governments will be obliged, under the pressure of all Allies concerned, to recognize each other and, for some time to come, two Germanys will live as separate sovereign states with close economic bonds. As an example of the desire for cooperation, he cited the cancellation of the Eastern Whitsun parade in West Berlin which was the result of Russian intervention with the East German government. He further believes that the Russians will, in not too distant a future, leave their occupation zone regardless of the decision taken by the Western powers in their respective zones. If the Western powers then choose to remain in Germany, the Communists will have a propaganda platform which may enable them to conquer politically all of Germany.

7. Although Rompe has not come to West Germany since September 1949, he has tried to maintain relations with West German scientists. He has started a program of inviting West German physicists to Berlin to give lectures at the Humboldt University.

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Comment:

Rompe's new job [redacted] as head of industrial research comes under the Ministry of Economy.

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Comment: Rompe is a member of the Kuratorium of the Zeiss foundation.

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